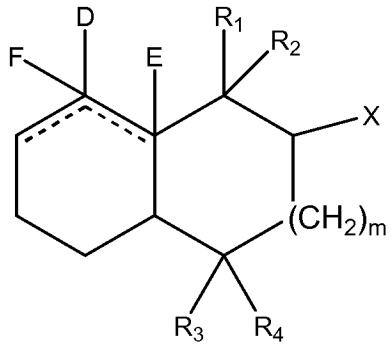
IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (cancelled) A compound defined according to the structure:



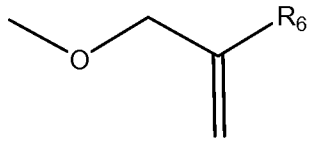
wherein m is 0 or 1;

wherein each of the dashed lines represent a carbon-carbon single bond or a carbon-carbon double bond with the proviso that not more than one dashed line represents a carbon-carbon double bond;

wherein X represents hydrogen or methyl;

wherein R_1, R_2, R_3 and R_4 each represent methyl or ethyl with the proviso that when X is methyl, each of R_1, R_2, R_3 and R_4 is methyl and when X is hydrogen, one of R_1, R_2, R_3 and R_4 is ethyl;

wherein D is =O when neither dashed line is a double bond, $-OR_5$ when either of the dashed lines is a double bond, $-OR_7$ when the dashed line respresents a trisubstituted double bond, or



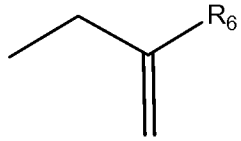
when the dashed line represents a tetrasubstituted double bond;

wherein R_6 is hydrogen or methyl;

wherein R_7 represents $C_1 - C_3$ lower alkyl;

wherein R_5 represents $C_4 - C_7$ cycloalkyl, $C_4 - C_7$ hydroxyalkenyl or tri- $C_1 - C_3$ lower alkyl silyl;

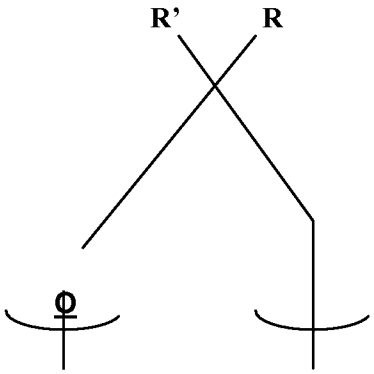
wherein E is hydrogen or



when neither dashed line is a double bond;

wherein F is hydrogen when neither dashed line is a double bond and D is not =O;

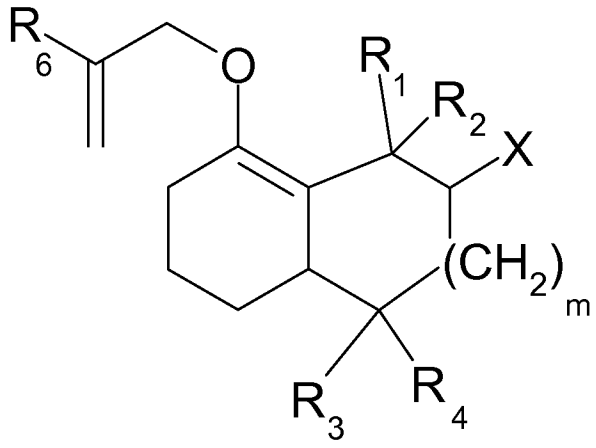
wherein D and E taken together represents the moiety:



when neither dashed line is a double bond;

wherein R and R' each represents hydrogen or methyl with the proviso that at least one of R and R' is methyl.

2. (currently amended)A compound ~~of claim 1~~ defined according to the structure:



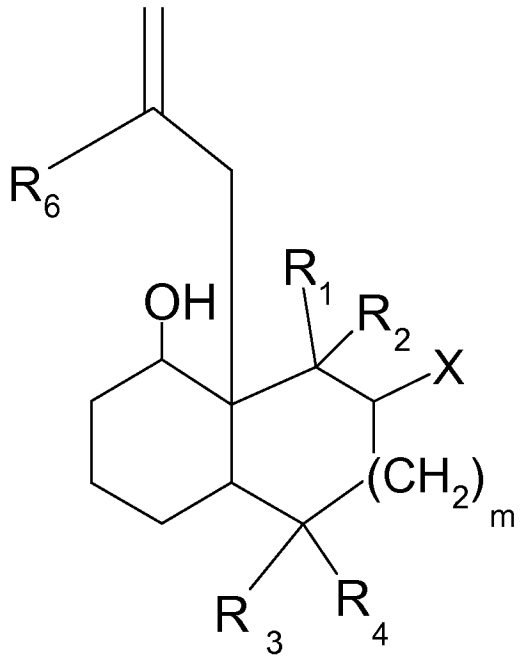
wherein m is 0 or 1;

wherein X is methyl or hydrogen;

wherein R_1, R_2, R_3 and R_4 each represent methyl or ethyl with the proviso that when X is methyl, each of R_1, R_2, R_3 and R_4 is methyl and when X is hydrogen, one of R_1, R_2, R_3 and R_4 is ethyl; and

wherein R_6 hydrogen or methyl.

3. (currently amended)A compound ~~of claim 1~~ defined according to the structure:



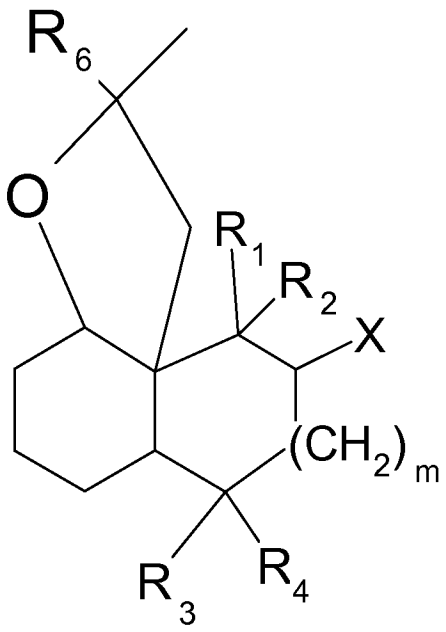
wherein m is 0 or 1;

wherein X is methyl or hydrogen;

wherein R_1, R_2, R_3 and R_4 each represent methyl or ethyl with the proviso that when X is methyl, each of R_1, R_2, R_3 and R_4 is methyl and when X is hydrogen, one of R_1, R_2, R_3 and R_4 is ethyl; and

wherein R_6 hydrogen or methyl.

4. (currently amended)A compound ~~of claim 1~~ defined according to the structure:



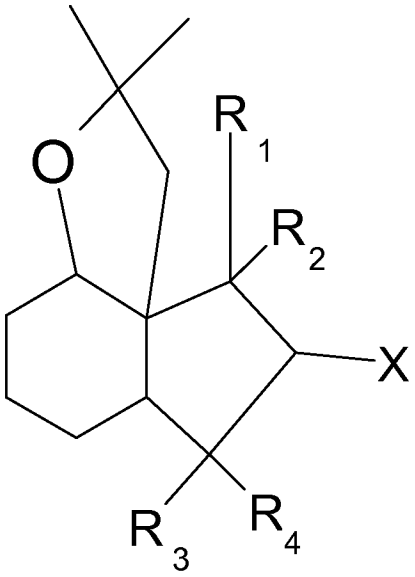
wherein m is 0 or 1;

wherein X is methyl or hydrogen;

wherein R_1, R_2, R_3 and R_4 each represent methyl or ethyl with the proviso that when X is methyl, each of R_1, R_2, R_3 and R_4 is methyl and when X is hydrogen, one of R_1, R_2, R_3 and R_4 is ethyl; and

wherein R_6 hydrogen or methyl.

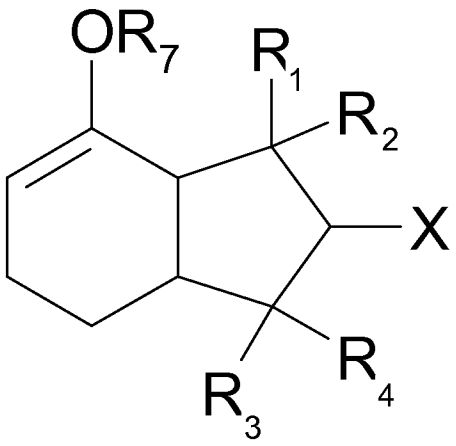
5. (original) A compound of claim 4 defined according to the structure:



wherein X is methyl or hydrogen; and

wherein R_1, R_2, R_3 and R_4 each represent methyl or ethyl with the proviso that when X is methyl, each of R_1, R_2, R_3 and R_4 is methyl and when X is hydrogen, one of R_1, R_2, R_3 and R_4 is ethyl.

6. (currently amended)A compound ~~of claim 1~~ defined according to the structure:

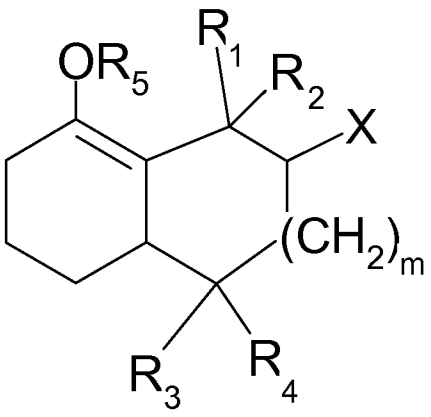


wherein X is methyl or hydrogen;

wherein R_1, R_2, R_3 and R_4 each represent methyl or ethyl with the proviso that when X is methyl, each of R_1, R_2, R_3 and R_4 is methyl and when X is hydrogen, one of R_1, R_2, R_3 and R_4 is ethyl; and

wherein R_7 represents $C_1 - C_3$ lower alkyl.

7. (currently amended)A compound ~~of claim 1~~ defined according to the structure:



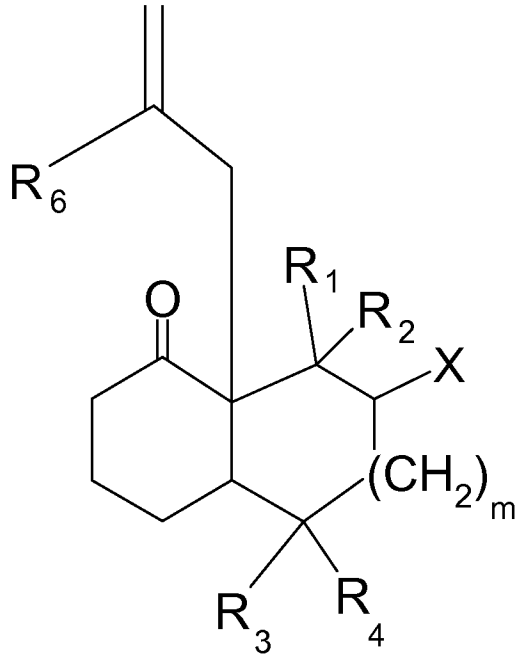
wherein m is 0 or 1;

wherein X is methyl or hydrogen;

wherein R_1, R_2, R_3 and R_4 each represent methyl or ethyl with the proviso that when X is methyl, each of R_1, R_2, R_3 and R_4 is methyl and when X is hydrogen, one of R_1, R_2, R_3 and R_4 is ethyl; and

wherein R_5 represents $C_4 - C_7$ cycloalkyl, $C_4 - C_7$ hydroxyalkenyl or tri- $C_1 - C_3$ lower alkyl silyl.

8. (currently amended)A compound ~~of claim 1~~ defined according to the structure:



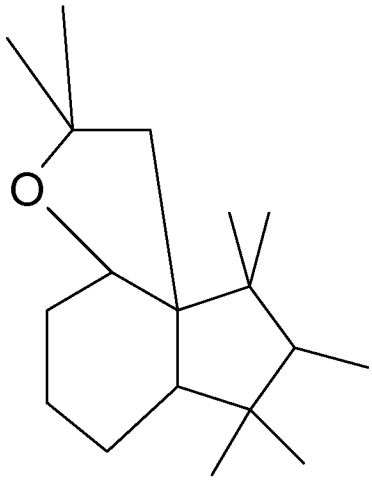
wherein m is 0 or 1;

wherein X is methyl or hydrogen;

wherein R_1, R_2, R_3 and R_4 each represent methyl or ethyl with the proviso that when X is methyl, each of R_1, R_2, R_3 and R_4 is methyl and when X is hydrogen, one of R_1, R_2, R_3 and R_4 is ethyl; and

wherein R_6 hydrogen or methyl.

9. (Original) A compound of claim 5 having the structure:

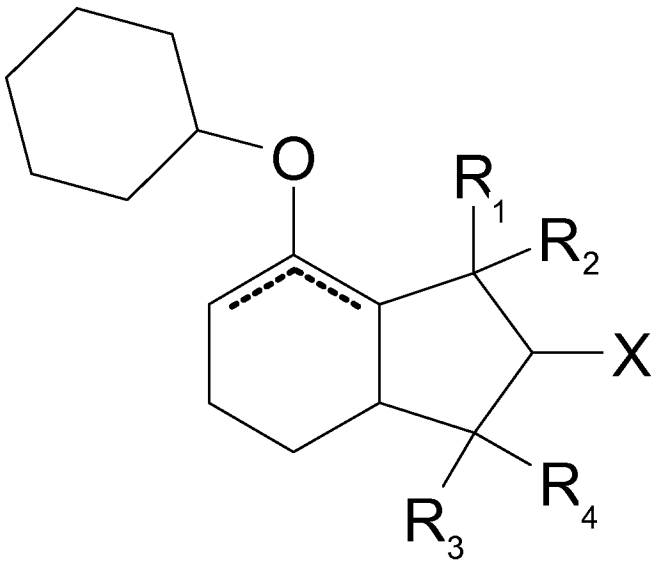


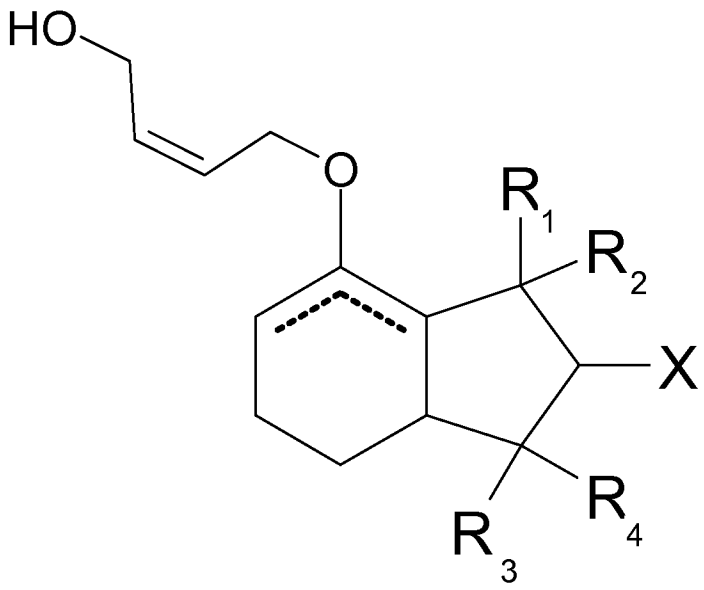
10. (Original) The optical isomers of the compound of claim 9:

(1R,5R,9R,11R)-Z	(1R,5S,9R,11S)-Z
(1R,5R,9R,11S)-Z	(1R,5R,9S,11S)-Z
(1R,5R,9S,11R)-Z;	(1R,5S,9S,11R)-Z
(1R,5S,9R,11R)-Z;	(1R,5S,9S,11S)-Z
(1S,5R,9R,11R)-Z;	(1S,5R,9S,11S)-Z
(1S,5R,9R,11S)-Z;	(1S,5S,9R,11S)-Z
(1S,5R,9S,11R)-Z;	(1S,5S,9S,11R)-Z
(1S,5S,9R,11R)-Z;	(1S,5S,9S,11S)-Z

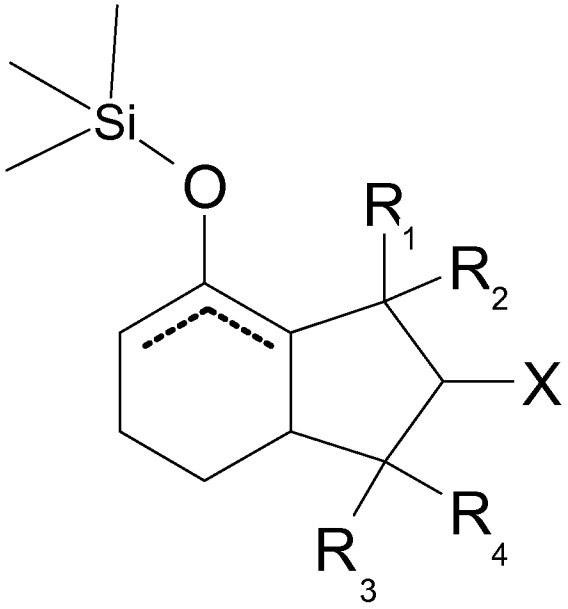
wherein "Z" represents the compound name, "3,3,10,10,11,12,12-heptamethyl-4-oxatricyclo[7.3.0.0<1,5>]dodecane".

11. (Original) A compound of claim 7 having a structure selected from the group consisting of:





and

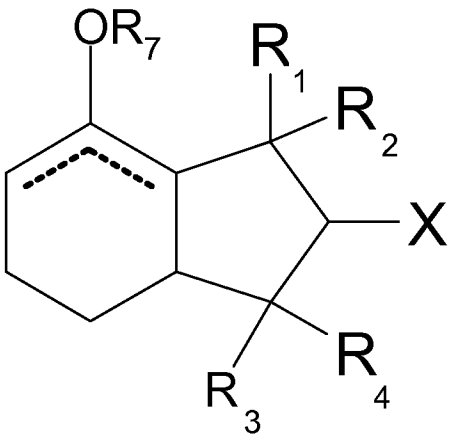


wherein X is methyl or hydrogen;

wherein R_1, R_2, R_3 and R_4 each represent methyl or ethyl with the proviso that when X is methyl, each of R_1, R_2, R_3 and R_4 is methyl and when X is hydrogen, one of R_1, R_2, R_3 and R_4 is ethyl; and

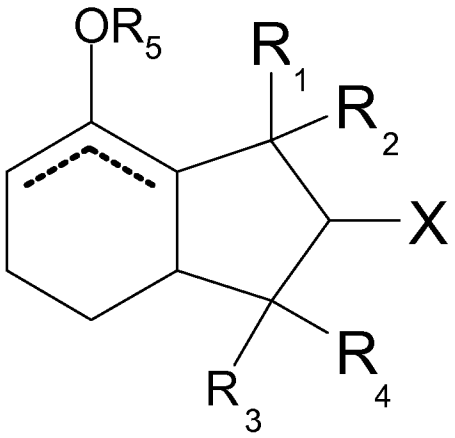
wherein in each of the molecular structures one of the dashed lines represents a carbon-carbon double bond and the other of the dashed lines represents a carbon-carbon single bond.

12. (previously presented) A composition comprising a mixture of compounds represented by the structure:



wherein in the mixture, in each of the compounds, one of the dashed lines represents a carbon-carbon double bond and the other of the dashed lines represents a carbon-carbon single bond;
wherein X is methyl or hydrogen;
wherein R_7 is $C_1 - C_3$ lower alkyl; and
wherein R_1, R_2, R_3 and R_4 each represent methyl or ethyl with the proviso that when X is methyl, each of R_1, R_2, R_3 and R_4 is methyl and when X is hydrogen, one of R_1, R_2, R_3 and R_4 is ethyl.

13. (previously presented) A composition comprising a mixture of compounds defined according to the structure:



wherein in the mixture, in each of the compounds, one of the dashed lines represents a carbon-carbon double bond and the other of the dashed lines represents a carbon-carbon single bond;
wherein X is methyl or hydrogen;
wherein R_5 represents $C_4 - C_7$ cycloalkyl, $C_4 - C_7$ hydroxyalkenyl or tri- $C_1 - C_3$ lower alkyl silyl; and
wherein R_1, R_2, R_3 and R_4 each represent methyl or ethyl with the proviso that when X is methyl, each of R_1, R_2, R_3 and R_4 is methyl and when X is hydrogen, one of R_1, R_2, R_3 and R_4 is ethyl.

14. – 18. (cancelled).

19. (previously presented) A method for improving, enhancing or modifying the odor properties of a fragrance by incorporating an olfactory acceptable amount of the composition of claim 13.

20. (previously presented) A method for improving, enhancing or modifying the odor properties of a fragrance by incorporating an olfactory acceptable amount of the compound of claim 4.

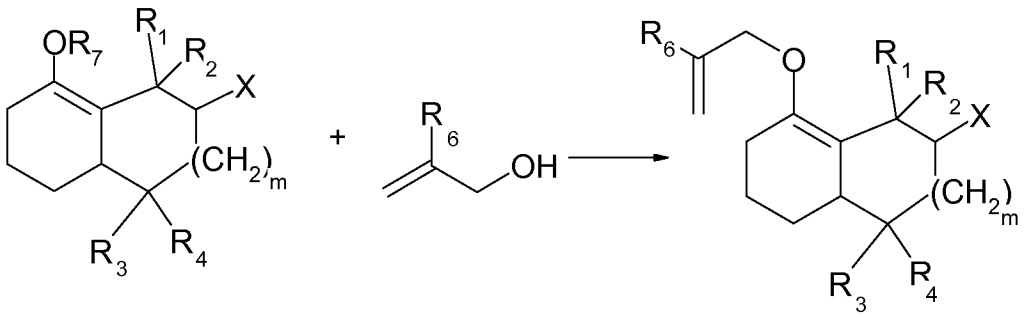
21. (previously presented) A method for improving, enhancing or modifying the odor properties of a fragrance by incorporating an olfactory acceptable amount of the compound of claim 5.

22. (Original) A method for improving, enhancing or modifying the odor properties of a fragrance by incorporating an olfactory acceptable amount of the compound of claim 9.

23. (Original) A method for improving, enhancing or modifying the odor properties of a fragrance by incorporating an olfactory acceptable amount of at least one isomer of claim 10.

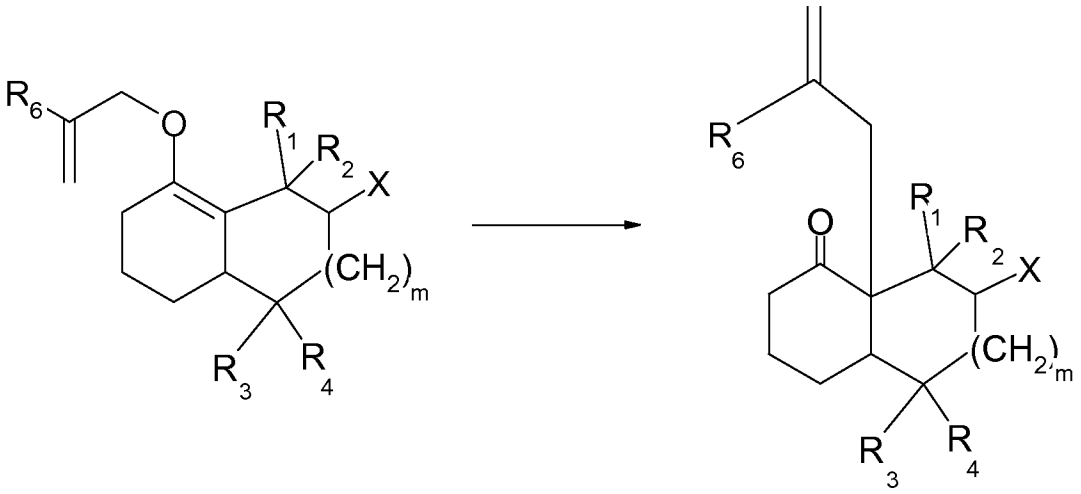
24. (Original) A method for improving, enhancing or modifying the odor properties of a fragrance by incorporating an olfactory acceptable amount of at least one compound of claim 11.

25. (Original) A process for synthesizing the compound of claim 2 comprising the step of carrying out the reaction:



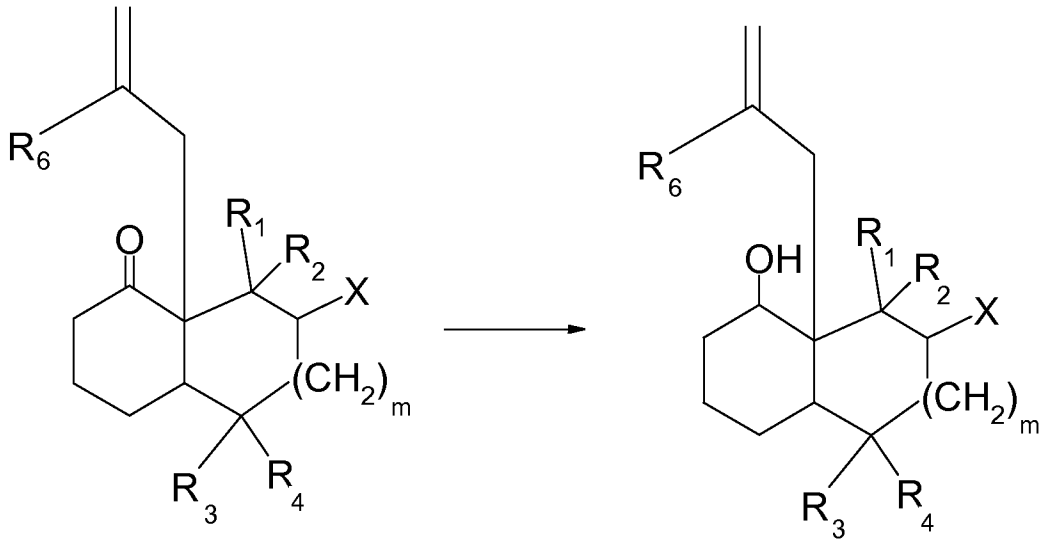
in the presence of a catalytic amount of a protonic acid.

26. (previously presented) A process for synthesizing the compound of claim 8 via the Claisen rearrangement reaction:



at about 190-210°C in the presence of a mild acid catalyst, said catalyst is selected from the group consisting of phosphoric acid, potassium diacid phosphate, sodium diacid phosphate, sodium bisulfate, an acid ion exchange catalyst, disodium citrate and hydroquinone.

27. (Original) A process for preparing a compound defined according to claim 4 comprising the steps of first carrying out the reaction:



using a metal hydride reducing agent; and then carrying out the reaction:
using a protonic acid cyclizing agent.